 Missouri Department of Natural Resources Administrative Policies and Procedures		
Chapter 4 Employment Hiring and Promotions Policy		
Interview and Evaluation of Candidates Procedures	Effective date	Revised
Number: 4.01-02	December 20, 2002	September 25, 2006

REFERENCES

1 CSR 20-3 Personnel Selection, Appointment, Evaluation and Separation

DNR Affirmative Action Plan

SP-10 State of Missouri Background Checks Policy

Related DNR policies

Conduct and Ethics 1.01

Employee Records 1.03

Division of State Parks Background Investigation Manual and other materials

Related DNR materials

Security Request Procedures for SAM II Financial and SAM II HR

<http://n-nr1ntra.ads.state.mo.us/das/sam-ii-information/default.htm>

DEFINITIONS

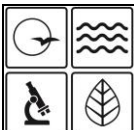
Candidate: A person applying for a job with the department.

Certificate: A list of names of eligible candidates for a job vacancy provided by the Office of Administration's Division of Personnel. A certificate is a subset of a register.

Criminal record review: A search into the documentation of a person's convictions for offenses against local, state and federal law. For the Department of Natural Resources, the minimum criminal record review is from the Missouri Highway Patrol.

In-house candidate: A DNR employee in regular status, who may or may not be on a register for a job classification, but meets all eligibility requirements for the vacant position. To be considered an in-house candidate, the employee responds to an in-house vacancy announcement.

Official personnel file: The file maintained by the Human Resources Program that is the official record concerning employment events or actions for an employee of the department.

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Nolo contendere: A statement in a criminal trial where the defendant declines to refute the evidence presented but agrees to the charges presented in the complaint.

Position: an individual job within the department

Reference check: A search into or documentation of a potential employee's history. A reference check may include, but is not limited to: confirmation of identity, work references, validation of driver's license, validations of other licenses, professional certification or degree required for the position, state income tax compliance.

Regular status: an employee's status after successfully completing the probationary period.

Top candidate(s): The individual or individuals to whom the supervisor or interview team wishes to offer employment.

Underutilized: Having fewer employees in job classifications in certain categories than reasonably would be expected by the makeup of the general population of Missouri. For example, a class could be underutilized in females, minorities or people with disabilities.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

The interview process is confidential. The interview panel should not share information or answers from the interview.

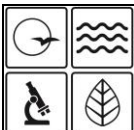
Interviews

The program hiring an employee schedules the interviews with the candidates. Candidates should be allowed at least seven (7) calendar days to arrange work and travel schedules. Interviews will be scheduled and conducted as soon as possible.

Interview panel

Interview panels shall be used to interview eligible candidates. Interview panels should consist of a combination of the following:

- staff in the position's supervisory chain of command;
- an individual with expertise, technical knowledge, or skill required in the position;
- an independent third party when possible
- a peer to the position being filled when possible

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Interview panels must have at least two (2) members but three member panels are encouraged.

Members of an interview panel must remain the same for consistency purposes. The interview process may involve more than one round. If a second round of interviews is held the members of the panel can be the same as the panel for the first round or can consist of different members than those in the first round. However, members of the second round interview panel must also remain the same once the second round interview process has begun. Upon request, the Human Resources Program will assist with assembling the interview panel.

The department encourages diversity in race and gender on interview panels seeking to fill underutilized positions. Underutilized positions are outlined in the DNR Affirmative Action Plan. Division rules and guidelines, where more restrictive, must be applied.

Interview plan

An interview plan (See Attachment 1) must be prepared before the interviews and used to evaluate each applicant. The items listed in the template must be addressed with each candidate interviewed.

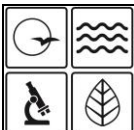
All interview questions must be job related and must not violate state and federal laws or regulations pertaining to equal employment opportunity and fair employment practices. In cases where abilities and skills can only be determined by a practical test, such tests may be administered only if they are job related and approved by the appointing authority. If you have questions about the appropriateness of an interview question, contact the Human Resources Program.

Preparation for the interview

The leader of the interview panel will meet with panel members before the actual interviews to discuss the questions, answer any panel member's questions, and to go over the interview process.

The interview

The panel should ensure that all candidates have approximately the same amount of time to answer questions during their interview. It is helpful to let the candidate know that panel members will take notes during the interview to assure that all relevant information is remembered and considered. In asking the interview questions, it is not necessary that

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the questions are read verbatim, but each should be asked consistently from interview to interview. Follow up questions may be asked to clarify responses.

During the interview, the panel must ask the candidate for permission to contact job references and record that permission. Since other employers often require written authorization from an applicant before releasing work history, the applicant should indicate their permission by signing the attached Reference Authorization form (Attachment 2)

Also during the interview, the panel must ask each candidate if he/she is a US citizen or authorized to work in the United States. Continue the interview whether the answer is yes or no. Consult with the Human Resources Program if the answer is no, following the interview.

Evaluating candidates

If a candidate provides false information for any materials or interviews during the hiring process (hiring, promotion or transfer) it is grounds for no further consideration for employment, immediate discipline or dismissal, for that position.

Evaluation of the interview

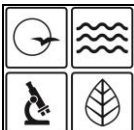
Each member of the interview panel individually assesses each candidate's responses after the interview(s) are completed. Panel members' interview sheets with their assessment of each candidate are submitted as part of the hiring recommendation and justification.

Reference check

The panel must conduct a reference check for the top candidates under consideration for employment as allowed by the signed Reference Authorization form. The candidate provides work references. Again, reference checks should be done for the top candidates, not necessarily all those interviewed.

A reference check should be done with the candidate's supervisor. However, for in-house candidates, it is the choice of the supervisor who is hiring an employee as to whether to contact references. This is due to the fact the supervisor or members of the panel may be sufficiently aware of the candidate's job performance.

A reference check form is completed for each reference contacted. Attachment 3 contains a template for a reference check.

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Since the State of Missouri is a single employer, information concerning documented performance and disciplinary actions contained in a current or past employee's official file, shall be given to another state department to prevent negligent hiring and retention liability regarding state employees.

A credit report may be requested for top candidates under consideration for sensitive, financial positions. For these circumstances, the candidate(s) are to be asked to provide a current credit report. The department will not retain any credit reports. The report will either be returned to the candidate or destroyed.

Reference checks must be completed before an offer for employment is made.

Criminal record review

The criminal record review should be completed and evaluated before appointment. The criminal record review authorization is kept by the Human Resources Program. The Human Resources Program can then determine if false information is provided on the authorization as compared to the criminal record review.

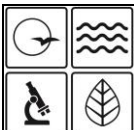
For the criminal record review, the Human Resources Program will request a search from the Missouri Highway Patrol's for the top candidates. There is no charge for this search.

Additional criminal record reviews may be obtained from other states or federal law enforcement agencies. An example of this would be use of the criminal records from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). Other types of background checks may have an associated cost.

Criminal records or pleas of nolo contendere will be considered when making hiring decisions, be it for initial hiring, transfer, promotion, demotion, or continued employment.

The Division of State Parks, Rangers Program, Environmental Emergency Response and SAMII users have additional background check procedures that will be followed. Any other hiring by these divisions will follow this department policy and procedures.

If the selected candidate begins work before the results of the criminal record review are available, the employment letter will state that continued employment is conditional upon an acceptable criminal record review.

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Requesting a criminal record check

The hiring program notifies the Human Resources Program of the need for the criminal record check with the names of the top candidates for a position. This notification can be via email. The Human Resources Program will make the request for criminal record information for those final, top candidates to the Missouri Highway Patrol.

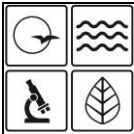
The Human Resources Program will notify the appropriate division director or designee the results of the search. That is, whether there is a criminal record, or not. If the search contains any type of criminal record, the Human Resources director and division director or designee will discuss the record and the potential impact on the position being filled. If found necessary, the Human Resources director will notify the hiring supervisor to remove a potential candidate from consideration due to information found in the criminal record review.

Questions considered when evaluating criminal record check information

If a candidate has a criminal record or pleas of nolo contendere, questions to evaluate the impact of the record in relation to the position include but are not limited to:

- Does the nature of the offense prevent the individual from performing the job applied for in an acceptable manner?
- Is the offense job related, such as, can the individual perform acceptably in spite of the conviction or offense?
- What is the nature and severity of the offense as well as a variety of surrounding facts and circumstances including but not limited to:
 - The age of the individual at the time of the offense;
 - The number of offenses or number of similar offenses;
 - The time that has elapsed since the last offense;
 - Whether the circumstances arose out of an employment situation?
- How would the duties, responsibilities and circumstances of the position be affected by the offense including but not limited to:
 - The nature and scope of the position's job responsibilities, autonomy and discretionary authority;
 - The extent to which the position holds fiscal responsibility to the department;
 - The opportunity in the position for repeat offense.

Additional considerations for current employees:



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- Did the employee report the offense in accordance with the Conduct and Ethics policy?
- In the case of a transfer, promotion or continued employment, is the hiring action in the best interest of the State in light of the specific offense?
- Is an involuntary transfer or reassignment in order in light of the offense?

Retention of reference and criminal record check information

All reference check information will be forwarded to the Human Resources Program with the hiring recommendation.

Any information concerning the criminal record review will be retained confidentially by the Human Resources Program in a file separate from the official personnel file.

Attachment 1 Template for an Interview Plan

Candidate's name _____ Date _____

Interviewer _____

Items in italics explain what type of information is needed. Delete the italicized sections when finalizing the interview plan.

Position Information

Classification Title: _____

Location _____

Unit/Section/Program: _____

Starting Salary: _____

Interview Team Members

List the interview team members. Indicate whether they are: in the supervisory chain of command for the position or a technical expert in the position's duties or an independent third party.

- 1.
- 2.
3. etc.

Special Job Requirements

List those special job requirements that are essential to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the vacant position. This list may include items such as: required licenses, professional registration or certification; special physical requirements; unusual work schedules; extensive travel or other factors that are unique to the position. Only those requirements that are necessary and can be shown to be bona fide occupational qualifications for the vacant position are to be listed.

The interview team should go over this information with each candidate and verify that the special job requirements are met.

- 1.
2. etc.

Major Job Components:

List in order of priority the job components that are major duties or responsibilities of the position as found in the PDF and the position's performance planning document. This is not a listing of all job components, rather the 6 or so major components.

- 1.
2. etc.

Interview Questions

Develop from 1 to 4 questions for each of the major job components. These questions will be used to evaluate each candidate's knowledge, skills, abilities and experience and how they relate to each of the job components. Tests cannot be used, without prior approval of the appointing authority.

Major job component:

Interview questions

- 1.

Interviewer notes and evaluation

Candidate response was _____excellent _____above average _____average _____below average

May we contact references about your job performance? Yes _____ No _____

Whom may we contact?

Are you a US citizen or authorized to work in the U.S.? Yes_____No_____

May we contact your current supervisor about your job performance? Yes _____ No _____

Whom may we contact?

We anticipate completing the interview process by _____

We hope to fill this position by _____

Do you have any questions?

Is there anything else you would like to tell the interview team?

General Observations

Candidate's ability to understand and respond to questions was:

Above average

Average

Below average

Candidate's composure during the interview was:

Above average

Average

Below average

Recommendation for Employment

I make the following recommendations for employment of this candidate:

Highly recommended

Recommended

Do not recommend

Comments

Interview panel member signature _____

Attachment 2
Reference Check Authorization

To: _____

From: _____

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone:
Fax:

To Whom It May Concern:

The person named below has applied to our department for employment. Your department/company is listed by the applicant as a past employer. We appreciate your time in completing, in confidence, the information requested below.

I hereby authorize you to release the following information concerning my employment to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and I release employer from all liability for any damages in furnishing such information.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Previous names if applicable: _____

X Applicant signature: _____

Attachment 3

Work Reference Check Template

This is a template is to be used as a guide. Not all questions listed have to be asked and other questions can be added. Design the reference check to best fit your hiring situation.

Please read this form prior to conducting a reference check. Complete a form for each supervisor or employer contacted. If possible with reference checks, seek information going back five (5) years. **Before contacting any reference, make sure the applicant has given approval on the resume, application or during the interview.**

_____ is being considered for the position of
Applicant's name
_____ with the department and I am trying to
Job title

verify the employment information he/she provided. I have _____ approval
Applicant's name
authorizing us to obtain this information. May I ask you some questions?

_____, _____
Name of reference Title

1. From your records, when did _____ begin and end
Applicant's name
employment with you?
Employed from _____ to _____

2. What was his/her job title? _____

3. Was he/she a satisfactory employee? Yes No

Could you elaborate please?

4. What do you feel are _____'s major strengths?
Applicant's name

5. What do you feel are his/her major weaknesses?

6. What was the reason for leaving your employment?

7. Would you rehire? Yes No

8. Do you personally recommend _____ for employment? Yes No

9. Is there anything else I should have asked or anything you wish to add?

Interviewer

Date